



*World Crisis* is one of a series of pocket-size booklets on the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda, author of *Autobiography of a Yogi*. These informal talks and essays offer inspiring and practical guidance for living our lives in a spiritually harmonious way—with grace and simplicity, with an inner equanimity in the face of life's seeming contradictions, and above all with joy, secure in the knowledge that we are at every moment in the embrace of a loving Divine Power.

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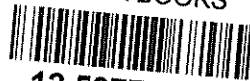
"HOW-TO-LIVE" SERIES

Paramahansa  
Yogananda

# World Crisis

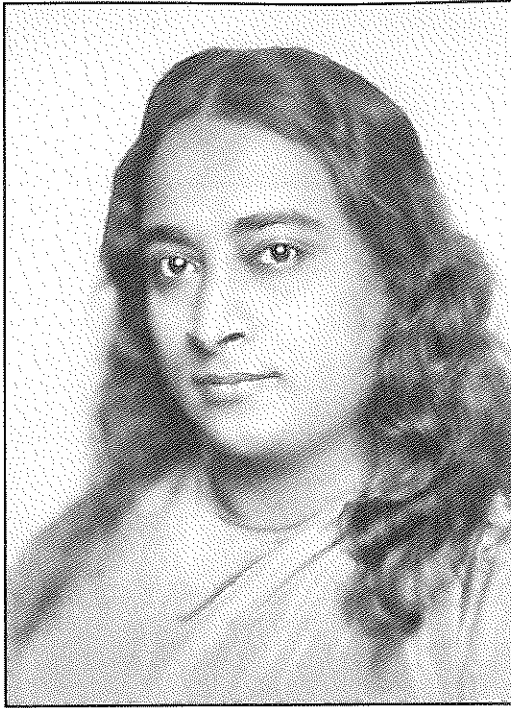
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PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA  
(1893–1952)

# World Crisis



by  
Paramahansa Yogananda

“How-to-Live” Series

No. 1700



*Self-Realization Fellowship*

FOUNDED 1920

*Paramahansa Yogananda*



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ABOUT THE "HOW-TO-LIVE" SERIES: These informal talks and essays were originally published by Self-Realization Fellowship in its quarterly magazine, *Self-Realization*. Some have also appeared in anthologies and on audiocassette recordings produced by the society. The "How-to-Live" series was created in response to requests from readers for pocket-size booklets presenting Paramahansa Yogananda's teachings on various subjects. The series offers guidance by Sri Yogananda and some of his longtime disciples, members of the monastic Self-Realization Order, many of whom had the opportunity to receive the spiritual direction and training of this beloved world teacher over a period of many years. New titles are added to the series periodically.

*There is a Power that will light  
your way to health, happiness,  
peace, and success, if you will  
but turn toward that Light.*

—PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

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Self-Realization Fellowship was founded by Paramahansa Yogananda as the instrument for the worldwide dissemination of his teachings. The Self-Realization Fellowship name and emblem (shown above) appear on all SRF books, recordings, and other publications, assuring the reader that a work originates with the society established by Paramahansa Yogananda and faithfully conveys his teachings.

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# World Crisis

BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

*A talk given on May 19, 1940,  
in Encinitas, California*

The analysis I shall give today is based upon common sense and experience. Common sense is simply intuitional reaction to one's environment. If you would develop your intuitive common sense, you would find the answers to all of your problems.

This is not a political talk. My domain is spirituality; I shall always live and act within that realm, and in the domain of Spirit I shall die. I speak only from that level of consciousness. As a youth in India I used to mix with people of both political parties, but I joined neither. I appreciated their respective points of view; but I saw that I would be able to do more good by spiritual means, for only spiritual power can truly reform the world. My lectures are of value only

if they have a definite effect in spiritually molding human lives. Sometime, after I am gone from this earth, you will realize all I have tried to do for you. If you follow the constructive advice I shall give today, you will one day be very grateful for it.

I had thought that through her good qualities America would escape the calamities of other nations. But a great crisis is going to come, a crisis such as never before has hit this country, because the emphasis now is on spending and on increasing taxation. When the false prosperity collapses, what will you do? There will be millions unemployed. Most are now living in blissful oblivion, unaware of the impending emergency.

There is a world revolution going on. It will change the financial system. In the karmic firmament of America I see one beautiful sign: that no matter what the world goes through, she will be better off than most other countries. But America will experience widespread misery, suffer-

ing, and changes just the same. You are used to the better things of life, and when you are obliged to live simply, you won't like it. It is not easy to be poor after being rich. You have no idea how this change is going to affect you through the years. Never before in the history of this land has there been so deep a contrast in living standards as will visit this country—the contrast between riches and poverty.

#### **Development of Monetary Exchange**

Think how primitive man went about making life secure. A small community lived together on a little plot of land. Man survived by his muscle and wit. He hunted and gathered other edibles. Gradually, as the community began to multiply and separate into clans, the more powerful took the most food and the best land, and quarrels and fighting began. Might became right. This was a mistake. When men learned that destruction of life and property also affected their food supply, they began to barter and

exchange—one had meat and another had grain, so they traded. Still, the mere exchange of goods was often inconvenient and not mutually satisfying. The monetary system was born, and man started to use shells as a medium of exchange. Eventually, the cumbersome shells were replaced by metal fashioned into coins.

Everything employed for exchange had to have some value. One metal used was iron, but it was too cheap and too heavy. Copper also was tried, then silver, and finally gold. These metals were chosen because their qualities and relative scarcity made them valuable. Not only were they prized for making coins, utensils, and ornaments, but for making medicines as well. Gold, for example, purifies the blood, and iron enriches it. No matter how the gold standard rises or falls, that value no one will be able to take away from gold. It was most highly treasured because of its scarcity and its beauty, and because it does not tar-

nish. For these reasons, it was used extensively for ornaments. But the present generation has tired of gold. Always seeking something new, they choose platinum now, which is of greater value than any of the other metals, yet looks like silver!

What has happened to gold as a medium of exchange today? Let us take the example of the United States. Under the gold standard, for every ten-dollar bill there has to be ten dollars' worth of gold in the U.S. Treasury. In 1934, there was no longer sufficient gold to cover the full value of the paper currency being issued. America faced a crisis. The country had to go off the gold standard. However, there appeared to be plenty of silver in the world, so the United States issued silver certificates, which made paper currency redeemable in silver. But when there will be more expenses for war and armament, the country won't be able to maintain enough silver reserve, either, to cover its paper currency.

What will happen if the United States goes off the gold and silver standard entirely, and prints bills of credit? We will have a barter system through the medium of certificates issued by the government. But these will not be acceptable in trade with the rest of the world.

I have heard that there are exchange clubs in which each member gives some labor and receives a credit of a certain value. In place of currency, credits are exchanged. A man goes to a doctor, and instead of paying the doctor with money, he gives him so many credits. The doctor then goes to the club and exchanges these credits for labor to have his house painted. My informant says that the system works. I am not sponsoring the program, just placing the idea before you.

#### **Lawful Correlation Between Money and Labor**

Money is the result of someone's labor. Those who merely affirm, "Day by day in

every way I am getting richer and richer," won't find it to be so. Positive thinking must be implemented by work. You can't get anywhere if you just sit back and say that whatever you need will come to you. You have to use the brains God gave you in order to succeed. In the United States, the businessman who would be successful must work very hard. European businessmen have a few hours' break in the afternoon, but the American businessman knows he faces great competition, and unless he works harder than his competitor, he is left behind. This is extremely wearing, because the human nervous system cannot stand more than five hours of intensive work at one time.

Everyone wants money, but most people would rather not have to work for it. Man is always hoping to get something for nothing. Everyone should put forth effort for what he gets. Unless all men work and appreciate the value of honest labor, there will be continuing inequities in the distrib-

ution of the world's wealth. Work is beneficial for all. Wealthy people who are lazy—the “idle rich”—lose concern for others and become insensitive to the difficulties of those who must struggle to make a living. They become rude and unsympathetic. Selfishness is sometimes a curse of wealth. But although the ambition to make money contains this potential for greed and selfishness, it can also be a noble impetus to self-development. The degree of development one achieves is in direct ratio to the service he gives to others, and to the world, as a result of his own personal success. The rich who have freely helped others in their need have used their wealth rightly.

#### **Brains and Labor Must Evolve in Harmony**

In a competitive civilization there must be evolution of both brains and labor. Hands and feet, stomach and brains, all are necessary to keep the human body functioning. The hands and feet are the laborers, and the brain is the executive. By their mutual coop-

eration the body is maintained. Similarly, both capital and labor—the brains of management and the hands of labor—have made this country what it is today. Since both are necessary, they should work in harmony.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. This country is more prosperous than any other country in the world. If you compared your poor with the poor in the rest of the world, you would thank your lucky stars that you live here. The average income of the laborer in India is \$3 per month! Can you imagine living on that? Many there eat only rice and a little salt; that is all. Laborers in America have a higher standard of living than those in England, Germany, or any other part of the world that I have visited. You are the richest people on the face of the globe; your laborers are paid more than any other group of laborers anywhere.

Yet the laborer is fighting the capitalist, saying, “Give us more money,” and now the capitalist is saying, “I am willing to give, but



where is the money?" Businessmen pay seventy-five cents on the dollar in taxes. How can they give more? Labor and capital will both find they have no more money, and that the government cannot give it to them; what will happen then? Businesses will be taken over by the government to keep them from collapsing. You can still avoid this. You have elected the administration to help you, not to control you. The government should show the people how to make money, and give a freer hand to business to create prosperity and jobs.

#### **Place More Wisdom Behind Government**

To accomplish this there must be more wisdom behind government. The American system of voting has a serious flaw in it. Half of the time the people don't know why they vote as they do. The one who gets elected is usually the one who can afford to spend great sums of money to tell the people how good he is. The voting system should be based on recognition of the real worth of

the candidate, and not on how much he spends to make his name known. The greatest scientists and statesmen of the country should be given a strong voice in the selection of the candidates who run for government positions.

No government is infallible; nevertheless, respect your government and cooperate with it. I believe in consistency: there is nothing more abominable than one who accepts the hospitality of a nation and then tries to destroy that land. Treacherous people dare not show their opinions openly. In wrongs committed through sense slavery there is compulsion, but treachery is voluntary, willful. Thus when the scribes and the Pharisees asked Jesus if they should follow the Mosaic law and stone Mary Magdalene for adultery, he said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."\* One by one, they all turned away and left. But this same Jesus, who asked God's mercy even for his

\* John 8:7.

crucifiers,\* said of the traitor Judas: "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born."† Jesus clearly meant that he who is treacherous is the greater sinner. The deliberate sin of treachery is despised by God.

**"I Pray That America Never Lose  
Her Universality"**

When I passed through Europe on my way to India a few years ago, I found that people there thought of the United States as just a materialistic money-making place, the home of millionaire movie stars and gangsters. I told them that this is not at all true of the majority. I have found her people to be industrious and good-hearted. The wonderful thing about America is that everyone has a chance; it has been a "melting pot of nations." I pray that America never lose her universality.

\* "Forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

† Matthew 26:24.

You who have loved freedom and who have responded to Lincoln's words—"government of the people, by the people, and for the people"—hold on to that ideal. I hope this country ever remains a great land of democracy where people can think and express their views freely, with no fear of imprisonment in concentration camps. In the United States you can make suggestions to your government. Write to your representatives in the administration; explain that you are willing to give your financial support in taxes, but you have to support yourself, and if taxes are increasing and prices are going up while wages are kept down, how are you going to do it? The government should not be thinking of new ways to tax the people, but of ways to stimulate the economy so that the people are able to pay taxes and still have something left to live on.

Instead of raising taxes and making people feel they cannot succeed in any direc-

tion, the government should give incentive to enterprising people who can promote business growth and further progress in other directions, thus creating jobs. It is free enterprise that has made this country the great nation it is today.

Insecurity exists because of abuses of the monetary system. A spiritual law is broken when people hold money and don't put it to work to create jobs and in other ways contribute to the welfare of others. Unfairness, dishonesty, greed—these bring on a financial crash such as the collapse of the monetary system in 1929. When the selfishly rich hold on to their wealth and don't want to give the laborer his due, disorder follows. This is what has happened. "The laborer is worthy of his hire," says the scripture.\* Everyone should work—both the rich and the poor—to contribute to the welfare of the nation and all the people in it. Those who grow rich in business should share their

\* Luke 10:7.

wealth, and I see that here in America they are more generous than in most other parts of the world in giving to needy communities. I have always liked the businessmen of India too, because they are usually very sympathetic to the needs of the people.

### **Concentrate on a Greater Spirit of Brotherhood**

The real need of the world is for a greater spirit of brotherhood. An example of how it works exists right here in our *ashrams*. We have land, we share food, we have our medical care, we all work to share the duties and to serve others—and we are happy. If I were to start reasoning that, as head of the society, I should have more than all of the others, what would happen? A quarrel would start. But if we continue to follow the teachings of Christ and the great ones, we will share and hold nothing to ourselves. Everything I have received I have given back to this work, to be shared. My thought is for you all, not myself. I am proud to live by the

spiritual law. I own nothing, yet I know that if I were hungry there would be thousands in the world who would feed me, because I have given to thousands. That same law will work for whoever thinks not of himself as the one who is going to starve, but of the other person in need.

There is enough money to blanket the world, and there is enough food to feed the world. Proper distribution is necessary. If men were not selfish, no one would be hungry or needy. Man should concentrate on brotherhood. Each one should live for all, loving everyone else as his own. I am sure that if anyone in Mt. Washington\* were going hungry, we would all get together and look after him. That community spirit must be lived by all people of all nations.

It is beneath the dignity of man to have homes of charity. Every able-bodied person

\* The international headquarters of Self-Realization Fellowship is situated atop Mt. Washington, overlooking Los Angeles. (*Publisher's Note*)

should be given work for a wage, rather than be an idle receiver of charity. And to allow the old and the infirm to become objects of pity and charity is unfair. Every citizen has helped in some way to make America what it is.

In establishing the old-age pension, the United States has taken a laudable step toward giving security to the aged. When people receive a pension, rather than charity, they are getting back their investment in America when they need it. It belongs to them. However, this pension should begin at age fifty-five, rather than sixty-five. After having spent two thirds of those fifty-five years working to make a living and to support his country, a citizen should have a few years' rest before he dies; a time to think deep thoughts, and to enjoy life. All of India's sages advocate this. After fifty-five, the good things in life should be savored—art, music, history, science, philosophy, meditation—and the many wonders of nature that God has put here for

our inspiration. Life should be more than just working to feed the body, confined to a factory or an office for eight hours a day till death comes.

The whole world is at the brink of war.\* Do you know where God is leading you? Even now, new streamlined methods of killing are being devised. And when everyone is finally armed to the teeth, God will show you that armament will not stop the war. If I use a sword, my brother will use a bigger sword. If I show him a gun, he will show me a bigger gun. People are tiring of this constant armament. Such principles can never bring peace. The countries involved don't want to talk peace now; but they will have to talk peace sometime, when they have lost much of their wealth and have killed off all the young. If the politicians who sponsor war were required to go to the front lines to face the enemy, they would not be so quick to advocate war!

\* World War II.

### Adopt Plain Living and High Thinking Now

How can you meet the world crisis that is coming? The best way is to adopt plain living and high thinking. Unless you make drastic changes in your living habits immediately, you will be rudely surprised; conditions will change in a way you cannot imagine now. You still have food and clothing, even luxuries, that people in other nations do not. So it is best to accustom yourself now to simple living. Choose a dwelling place that is adequate, but not larger than you really need, and if possible in an area where taxes and other living expenses are reasonable. Make your own clothes; can your own food. Grow your own vegetable garden, and if feasible, keep a few chickens to produce eggs. Work the garden yourself, or you will lose money in paying wages to a gardener. Keep life simple and enjoy what God has provided, without seeking false and expensive pleasures. There is much in God's

hidden nature to fascinate the mind of man. Use your free time to read worthwhile books, meditate, and enjoy an uncomplicated life. Isn't this better—simple living, fewer worries, and the time to seek God—than to have a huge house, two cars, and time payments and a mortgage you cannot meet? Man has to go back to the land; it will come to pass eventually. If you think this isn't so, you will find you are mistaken. But regardless of where your home and work are, cut out luxuries, buy less expensive clothes, supply yourself with things you really need, grow your own food, and put money aside regularly for greater security.

Everyone thinks of ways to spend money, but few think how to conserve money. Don't be wasteful, because you are going to have to learn to do without. Parents should set the example and train the whole family to save and to avoid waste.

You can save only by exercising self-control. Heed this warning. Take the best

advice I can give; follow it and you will be spared much grief. Don't spend foolishly. If you waste money on luxuries you will not be spared. Pay cash for everything you buy, and if you don't have the cash, don't buy. Don't borrow; you will have a hard time paying on the principal because of the high interest. You must learn to save in every way possible. Don't have a poverty consciousness, but exercise whatever discipline is necessary to save and also have the means to pay your bills. No one else is going to pay them for you. Keep your assets in cash and in government securities. Use federally protected savings, such as U.S. bonds and U.S. Treasury bills. Thus you can help your government as well as protect your money.

#### God Is Your Greatest Security

According to tradition, as a *sannyasi* I am supposed to be free of material responsibilities; a monk who spends his time sitting on the banks of the Ganges in medita-

tion. But in this country I have had to work hard to support my large spiritual family! My portion in this life is to sacrifice and to suffer for all. Whoever comes to me in the right spirit, with devotion for God, will never be the same again. God has shown me how to break the secret thoughts of delusion that bind men's souls. When I give that blessing, "virtue" goes out of me.\* So come here with that spirit, and you shall receive.

Most of all I emphasize that you should get busy seeking God through meditation. Self-Realization Fellowship gives you the opportunity to study and to progress spiritually at home. Become a member of Self-Realization. Read the immortal truths in the *Lessons*. After you have studied theoretically, you will understand everything about metaphysics; and if you practice these great teachings, you will be on the way to

\* "And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue [transforming vibratory power of God] is gone out of me" (Luke 8:46).

becoming a master. Don't wait, for you have a long way to go.

I do not speak to you through emotion, but through the vibration of my own experience.\* God can be contacted at any moment, any day! It is possible to feel the inspiration of His presence anytime, in any place. So that whenever you think of Him, His inspiration will be there. In every lovely experience you will behold God.

Just beneath the shadows of this life is His wondrous Light. The universe is a vast temple of His presence. When you meditate, you will find doors opening to Him everywhere. When you have communion with Him, not all the ravages of the world can take away that Joy and Peace.



\* The vibration of Truth that great masters experience within themselves through the intuitive perception of the soul. (*Publisher's Note*)

**PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA**  
**(1893–1952)**

*“The ideal of love for God and service to humanity found full expression in the life of Paramahansa Yogananda. . . . Though the major part of his life was spent outside India, still he takes his place among our great saints. His work continues to grow and shine ever more brightly, drawing people everywhere on the path of the pilgrimage of the Spirit.”*

—from a tribute by the Government of India upon issuing a commemorative stamp in Paramahansa Yogananda’s honor

Born in India on January 5, 1893, Paramahansa Yogananda devoted his life to helping people of all races and creeds to realize and express more fully in their lives the true beauty, nobility, and divinity of the human spirit.

After graduating from Calcutta University in 1915, Sri Yogananda took formal vows as a monk of India’s venerable monastic Swami Order. Two years later, he began his life’s work with the founding of a “how-to-live” school—since grown to twenty-one educational institutions throughout India—where traditional academic subjects were offered together with yoga training and instruction in spiritual ideals. In 1920, he was invited to serve as India’s delegate to an International Congress of Religious Liberals in Boston. His address to the Congress and



subsequent lectures on the East Coast were enthusiastically received, and in 1924 he embarked on a cross-continental speaking tour.

Over the next three decades, Paramahansa Yogananda contributed in far-reaching ways to a greater awareness and appreciation in the West of the spiritual wisdom of the East. In Los Angeles, he established an international headquarters for Self-Realization Fellowship—the nonsectarian religious society he had founded in 1920. Through his writings, extensive lecture tours, and the creation of Self-Realization Fellowship temples and meditation centers, he introduced hundreds of thousands of truth-seekers to the ancient science and philosophy of Yoga and its universally applicable methods of meditation.

Today the spiritual and humanitarian work begun by Paramahansa Yogananda continues under the direction of Sri Daya Mata, one of his earliest and closest disciples and president of Self-Realization Fellowship/Yogoda Satsanga Society of India since 1955. In addition to publishing his writings, lectures, and informal talks (including a comprehensive series of *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons* for home study), the society oversees temples, retreats, and centers around the world; the monastic communities of the Self-Realization Order; and a Worldwide Prayer Circle.

In an article on Sri Yogananda's life and work, Dr. Quincy Howe, Jr., Professor of Ancient Languages at Scripps College, wrote: "Paramahansa Yogananda brought to the West not only India's perennial promise of God-realization, but also a practical method by which spiritual aspirants from all walks of life may progress rapidly toward that goal. Originally appreciated in the West only on the most lofty and abstract level, the spiritual legacy of India is now accessible as practice and experience to all who aspire to know God, not in the beyond, but in the here and now...Yogananda has placed within the reach of all the most exalted methods of contemplation."

## HOW-TO-LIVE SERIES GLOSSARY

**ashram.** A spiritual hermitage; often a monastery.

**astral world.** The subtle world of light and energy that lies behind the physical universe. Every being, every object, every vibration on the physical plane has an astral counterpart, for in the astral universe (heaven) is the “blueprint” of the material universe. A discussion of the astral world and the still subtler causal or ideational world of thought may be found in Chapter 43 of Paramahansa Yogananda’s *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

**Aum (Om).** The Sanskrit root word or seed-sound symbolizing that aspect of Godhead which creates and sustains all things; Cosmic Vibration. *Aum* of the Vedas became the sacred word *Hum* of the Tibetans; *Amin* of the Muslims; and *Amen* of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians. The world’s great religions state that all created things originate in the cosmic vibratory energy of *Aum* or *Amen*, the Word or Holy Ghost. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by him [the Word or *Aum*]; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:1,3).

**avatar.** From the Sanskrit word *avatara* (“descent”), signifying the descent of Divinity into flesh. One who attains union with Spirit and then returns to earth to help humanity is called an avatar.

**Bhagavad Gita.** “Song of the Lord.” Part of the ancient Indian *Mahabharata* epic, presented in the form of a dialogue between the avatar (*q.v.*) Lord Krishna and his disciple Arjuna. A profound treatise on the science of Yoga and a timeless prescription for happiness and success in everyday living.

**Bhagavan Krishna (Lord Krishna).** An avatar (*q.v.*) who lived in India many centuries before the Christian era. His teachings on Yoga (*q.v.*) are presented in the Bhagavad Gita. One of the meanings given for the word *Krishna* in the Hindu scriptures is “Omniscient Spirit.” Thus, *Krishna*, like *Christ*, is a title signifying the spiritual magnitude of the avatar—his oneness with God. (See *Christ Consciousness*.)

**Christ center.** The center of concentration and will at the point between the eyebrows; seat of Christ Consciousness and of the spiritual eye (*q.v.*).

**Christ Consciousness.** The projected consciousness of God immanent in all creation. In Christian scripture it is called the “only begotten son,” the only pure reflection in creation of God the Father; in Hindu scripture it is called *Kutastha Chaitanya*, the cosmic intelligence of Spirit everywhere present in creation. It is the universal consciousness, oneness with God, manifested by Jesus, Krishna, and other avatars. Great saints and yogis know it as the state of *samadhi* (*q.v.*) meditation wherein their consciousness has become identified with the intelligence in every particle of creation; they feel the entire universe as their own body.

**Cosmic Consciousness.** The Absolute; Spirit beyond creation. Also the *samadhi*-meditation state of oneness with God both beyond and within vibratory creation.

**guru.** Spiritual teacher. The *Guru Gita* (verse 17) aptly describes the guru as “dispeller of darkness” (from *gu*, “darkness” and *ru*, “that which dispels”). Though the word *guru* is often misused to refer simply to any teacher or instructor, a true God-illuminated guru is one who, in his attainment of self-mastery, has realized his identity with the omnipresent Spirit. Such a one is uniquely qualified to lead others on their inward spiritual journey.

The nearest English equivalent to *guru* is the word *Master*. As a mark of respect, Paramahansa Yogananda’s disciples often use this term in addressing or referring to him.

**karma.** The effects of past actions, from this or previous lifetimes. The law of karma is that of action and reaction, cause and effect, sowing and reaping. By their thoughts and actions, human beings become the molders of their own destinies. Whatever energies a person has set into motion, wisely or unwisely, must return to that person as their starting point, like a circle inexorably completing itself. An individual’s karma follows him or her from incarnation to incarnation until fulfilled or spiritually transcended. (See *reincarnation*.)

**Krishna.** See *Bhagavan Krishna*.

**Kriya Yoga.** A sacred spiritual science, originating millenniums ago in India. A form of *Raja* (“royal” or

“complete”) *Yoga*, it includes certain advanced techniques of meditation that lead to direct, personal experience of God. *Kriya Yoga* is explained in Chapter 26 of *Autobiography of a Yogi*, and is taught to students of the *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons* who fulfill certain spiritual requirements.

**maya.** The delusory power inherent in the structure of creation, by which the One appears as many. *Maya* is the principle of relativity, inversion, contrast, duality, oppositional states; the “Satan” (lit., in Hebrew, “the adversary”) of the Old Testament prophets. Paramahansa Yogananda wrote: “The Sanskrit word *maya* means ‘the measurer’; it is the magical power in creation by which limitations and divisions are apparently present in the Immeasurable and Inseparable.... In God’s plan and play (*lila*), the sole function of Satan or *maya* is to attempt to divert man from Spirit to matter, from Reality to unreality.... *Maya* is the veil of transitoriness in Nature... the veil that each man must lift in order to see behind it the Creator, the changeless Immutable, eternal Reality.”

**paramahansa.** A spiritual title signifying one who has attained the highest state of unbroken communion with God. It may be conferred only by a true guru on a qualified disciple. Swami Sri Yukteswar bestowed the title on Paramahansa Yogananda in 1935.

**reincarnation.** A discussion of reincarnation may be found in Chapter 43 of Paramahansa Yogananda’s *Autobiography of a Yogi*. As explained there, by the law of karma (*q.v.*), the past actions of human beings set into

motion the effects that draw them back to this material plane. Through a succession of births and deaths they return to earth repeatedly to undergo here the experiences that are the fruits of those past actions, and to continue a process of spiritual evolution that leads ultimately to realization of the soul's inherent perfection and union with God.

**samadhi.** Spiritual ecstasy; superconscious experience; ultimately, union with God as the all-pervading supreme Reality.

**Satan.** See *maya*.

**Self.** Capitalized to denote the *atman*, or soul, the divine essence of man, as distinguished from the ordinary self, which is the human personality or ego. The Self is individualized Spirit, whose essential nature is ever-existing, ever-conscious, ever-new Bliss.

**Self-realization.** Realization of one's true identity as the Self, one with the universal consciousness of God. Paramahansa Yogananda wrote: "Self-realization is the knowing—in body, mind, and soul—that we are one with the omnipresence of God; that we do not have to pray that it come to us, that we are not merely near it at all times, but that God's omnipresence is our omnipresence; that we are just as much a part of Him now as we ever will be. All we have to do is improve our knowing."

**spiritual eye.** The single eye of intuition and spiritual perception at the Christ (*Kutastha*) center (*q.v.*) be-

tween the eyebrows; the entryway into higher states of consciousness. During deep meditation, the single or spiritual eye becomes visible as a bright star surrounded by a sphere of blue light that, in turn, is encircled by a brilliant halo of golden light. This omniscient eye is variously referred to in scriptures as the third eye, the star of the East, the inner eye, the dove descending from heaven, the eye of Shiva, and the eye of intuition. "If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matthew 6:22).

**Yoga.** The word *Yoga* (from the Sanskrit *yuj*, "union") means union of the individual soul with Spirit; also, the methods by which this goal is attained. There are various systems of Yoga. That taught by Paramahansa Yogananda is *Raja Yoga*, the "royal" or "complete" yoga, which centers around practice of scientific methods of meditation. The sage Patanjali, foremost ancient exponent of Yoga, has outlined eight definite steps by which the *Raja Yogi* attains *samadhi*, or union with God. These are (1) *yama*, moral conduct; (2) *niyama*, religious observances; (3) *asana*, right posture to still bodily restlessness; (4) *pranayama*, control of *prana*, subtle life currents; (5) *pratyahara*, interiorization; (6) *dharana*, concentration; (7) *dhyana*, meditation; and (8) *samadhi*, superconscious experience.

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